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A New Turn or More of the Same? A Structured Analysis of Recent Developments in Russian Foreign Policy Discourse

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Matthew Frear and Honorata Mazepus

Abstract

Russia and the European Union (EU) pursue active policies in their shared neighbourhood. The official Russian foreign policy discourses that we analyse here provide insights into the most important foreign policy ideas that Russia seeks to promote. They show how Russia perceives its role in the region and the world, as well as how it wants to develop its relations with neighbours. Building on previous studies identifying the main discourses in Russian foreign policy, this paper offers a new, comprehensive analysis of recent Foreign Policy Concepts and the annual Presidential Addresses to the Federal Assembly during President Vladimir Putin's third term. The paper contributes to our understanding of Russian foreign policy discourses and Russia's stance vis-a-vis the EU in the Eastern Partnership (EaP) region. Rather than focusing on a single aspect of foreign policy (a common practice adopted by many existing studies), it provides an analysis of all of them, thereby showing any shift in emphasis on different aspects of foreign policy and regions over time. Moreover, it takes a closer look at the content of the economic pitch within the official Russian discourses to attract the countries in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). In this way, rather than focusing on what Russia does not offer (the values and political system of Western countries), it investigates whether the discourses presented contain a potential positive offer for the countries in the region.

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Contents

Acronyms and Abbreviations

APEC	Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
BRICS	Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
CoE	Council of Europe
CSTO	Collective Security Treaty Organization
CU	Customs Union of Russian, Belarus and Kazakhstan
EAEU	Eurasian Economic Union
EU	European Union
FPC	Foreign Policy Concept
G20	Group of Twenty (major economies)
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
ROC	Russian Orthodox Church
SCO	Shanghai Cooperation Organization
UN	United Nations
USRB	Union State of Russia and Belarus
WTO	World Trade Organization

1. Introduction

The most important official sources of Russian foreign policy discourses include: the Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation (since 1993), the Military Doctrine (since 1993), the National Security Strategy (since 1997), as well as an Information Security Doctrine, a Concept of Participation in International Development Assistance, and a Concept of Participation in BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa). Scholars have also identified other informative sources for discourses on international relations such as the annual Presidential Address to the Federal Assembly (since 1994), Vladimir Putin's newspaper articles published during the presidential election campaign in 2011/2012, and the presidents' speeches during the Valdai International Discussion Club (Light 2015: 13-14; Sinovets 2016; Tolz & Harding 2015). We have compiled a database of these texts and presented them in the Appendix A[1]. While many of them inform our understanding of Russia's foreign policy, in this paper we focus on a systematic analysis of two types of documents: Foreign Policy Concepts and Presidential Addresses to the Federation Assembly.

The ideas, messages and arguments presented in such official documents signal how Russia wants to present its role in the world and the region and how it wants to develop its relations with neighbours. They remain important, even if the more recent focus by outside commentators has been on the covert propaganda aspects of Russian influence. Official statements and narratives do not always overlap with the actions of the Russian elites (Stent 2008: 1090), nevertheless they are a valuable source of information about Russia's international ambitions and the image it wants to project to external audiences (Ambrosio & Vandrovec 2013: 439-440). These speeches and official documents can signal the course of Russian foreign policy to neighbouring countries. Therefore, understanding the main messages contained in such foreign policy discourse is an important factor when assessing the relations between Russia and the countries of interest for our project, namely Belarus, Moldova, and Ukraine. This analysis will contribute to ongoing research in EU-STRAT dealing with competing Russian and EU messages in the shared neighbourhood. The structured analysis aims to contribute to the debate on the 'competing rationalities' (Averre 2009) of the involvement of Russia and the EU in this post-Soviet region.

To achieve this, the paper systematically analyses the original communications of the Russian authorities since 2012, when Vladimir Putin returned for a third term as president. A focus on this period allows us to address claims by commentators that Putin's third term has marked a turn in Russian foreign policy discourse. This turn is seen by some as civilizational (Linde 2016: 622-623) or conservative (Tsygankov 2014a: 60), while others describe it as geopolitical (Hill & Lo 2013).

We have analysed all of Putin's annual Federal Assembly addresses since 2012, as well as the official Foreign Policy Concepts of the Russian Federation that have been in force during Putin's third term. The quantitative analysis was conducted by coding these documents using categories identified in a review of the extant literature. We aimed to establish what the balance is between different messages and concepts in these documents and to what extent the ideas emphasized by scholarly analyses until 2012 are continued or changed in the texts after 2012. We also remained open to new concepts that might emerge through a qualitative analysis of the recent texts. We were especially interested in whether an economic focus is to be found in existing documents and how Russia might address the countries in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) region through an

[1] This database provides links to the full texts in Russian and, where they exist, approved translations into English.

emphasis on economic integration. In this way, rather than focusing on what Russia does not offer (the values or political system of Western countries), we also investigated whether the discourse contains a positive offer for the countries in the region. In other words, what is the content of the Russian offer beyond the negation of the Western one?

The paper proceeds as follows: in the following section we discuss existing studies of Russian foreign policy discourses and summarize their arguments as a foundation for our research design in this paper. In section 3 we explain our methodology and define the approach taken in conducting the content analysis. The second part of the paper in sections 4 and 5 analyses our findings from the Foreign Policy Concepts and Presidential Addresses, noting where they differ from the prevalent trends observed in the literature and highlighting new developments.

2. Russian Foreign Policy Discourses: Existing Studies

There is an extensive literature on the main ideas contained in Russian foreign policy discourses. It is possible to roughly organize these works into three clusters. The first – and largest – cluster of studies analyses the role of identity, ideology, and values in the foreign policy discourses of Russia (e.g. Godzimirski 2008; Kassianova 2001; Laruelle 2015, 2016; Laruelle & Gabowitsch 2008; Light 2003; Linde 2016; Lo 2008; Slade 2007; Trenin 2011, Tsygankov 2014b, 2016a, 2016b; Zevelev 2016). The second cluster of articles focuses on the issues broadly understood as security, power, and sovereignty (e.g. Deyermond 2016; Makarychev 2008; Sharafutdinova 2014; Smith 2016; Stent 2008; Urnov 2014;). The final cluster of papers sheds light on the role of economics and modernization in foreign policy (e.g. David & Romanova 2015; Dragneva & Wolczuk 2015b: 63-82; Freire & Simão 2015; Makarychev & Meister 2015). Some papers could fit into more than one cluster as the issues touched upon by papers from different clusters partially overlap (for example, the discussions of sovereignty and values tend to go hand in hand) and inform one another (for example, economic strength as the source of power). Concepts and discourses are not mutually exclusive. For example, Dragneva and Wolczuk (2015a: 147-148; 2015b: 9) argue that successful regional economic integration is also perceived as an important signifier of Russia's 'great power' status.

The following sections will briefly outline the ideas contained in the Russian foreign policy discourse belonging to the three clusters above. It begins with the largest range of literature that is devoted to identity, ideology, and values. It then turns to security, power and sovereignty, before finally summarizing the literature on the discourse about the economy, globalization and modernization. These in turn form the basis for coding the more recent foreign policy documents analysed in this paper.

2.1 Civilization, values and identity

Analyses of Russian foreign policy discourse usually give great prominence to the issues of Russian national identity formation (Duncan 2005; Hopf 1999; Kassianova 2001; Koldunova 2015). Many of these studies trace the debates about what kind of state the Russian Federation is and aspires to be, what its place in world politics is, and with what values and norms it identifies (Light 2003: 44). This self-identification (defining what you are)

is simultaneously a process of differentiation from the 'Other' (defining what you are not), and throughout Russian history the most important referent for the differentiation of Russia was the West and Europe in particular (Kassianova 2001: 822; Tsygankov 2007: 376). The dominant discourses on Russian identity are an expression of a persistent dilemma: whether Russia wants to be perceived as 'a part of Europe or apart from Europe' (Baranovsky 2000: 443).

Scholars largely agree that at the very beginning of the 1990s, the vision that dominated among Russian foreign-policy decision makers and some others in the political elites was that of the so-called 'Westernizers': supporting liberal ideas and oriented towards the reconstruction of links with Europe and the West in general (Light 2003; Svarin 2016). They believed in the congruence of Russian and Western values (Kassianova 2001: 824). In contrast to the Westernizers, the so-called 'Eurasianists' have tended to see Russia as a distinct land-based civilization stretching over Europe and Asia (Duncan 2005: 288; Tsygankov 2010: 381). Although Eurasianism is not a uniform ideology and there exist various strands within it, they share several main tenets. These are the criticism of universalism, Europocentrism and European values, the distinctiveness and superiority of the values of Russia, glorification of the Russian past, the importance of religion and spiritualism, and emphasis on Russia as a great power on the Eurasian continent (Laruelle 2004; Tsygankov 2010: 381).

In between these two identity ideas (Russia as a part of the West and Russia as a Eurasian power) there is a group referred to as 'pragmatic nationalists' or 'statists' (Light 2003: 45; Tsygankov 2016a: 149). They do not negate Russia's links to the West, but postulate an assertive position towards it, development of relations with other states, and protection of the Russian values. Within this strand of thought about national identity, ideas such as sovereign democracy were introduced. According to Surkov (2009), the author of the idea, Russia should be sovereign in the matters of domestic and foreign policy and immune to external influences. Some scholars, such as Sharafutdinova (2014), have taken this further and interpret the events and decisions of the Russian government in Putin's third term as a turn towards 'moral sovereignty' based on traditional Russian values. While certain Western values might be rejected, this does not necessarily mean that Russia has turned its back on Europe. Instead, some proponents would argue that a sovereign Russia represents a true, 'authentic', traditional European civilization (Laruelle 2016).

In addition, there is a debate about the construction of the Russian nation itself. While the Russian Orthodox Church (ROC) emphasizes the dominant role of white Orthodox ethnic Russians, Eurasianists see the nation as 'a special cultural symbiosis of Slavic and Turkic influences' (Tsygankov 2016a, 153). The ambiguity of the distinction between ethnic (*russkii*) and civic (*rossiiskii*) nation-building agendas has never been completely resolved by the Russian authorities (Shevel 2011; Smith 2016: 171). As summarized by Shevel (2011: 180), the discourses on nationhood usually offer three options for defining the Russian nation on the basis of ethnicity: as a community of ethnic Russians, as a community of Eastern Slavs (which would include Belarusians and Ukrainians), or as a community of Russian speakers including the so-called 'compatriots' living beyond Russia's borders.

How these boundaries of the Russian nation are delineated has significant consequences for relations with neighbours in the post-Soviet space that often have large Russian-speaking minorities. These countries also have to contend with the concept of a vaguely-defined 'Russian World' (*Russkii mir*), one which embraces an ethnic and cultural definition of the Russian nation in its broadest context and has the potential to undermine the sovereignty of neighbouring states (Zevelev 2016: 12-16).

As this brief overview has shown, the self-identification of Russia as European, Eurasian, or as a civilization on its own, as well as the definition of the Russian nation, have potential consequences for Russia's behaviour in the region. Therefore we have sought in our analysis to identify whether a distinct view on Russian identity emerges in the foreign policy documents.

2.2 Sovereignty and the world order

A major thread of the narrative about Russia's place in the world throughout the 2000s has been restoring Russia's deserved position in the international order as one of the great powers and a global player in a multipolar world (Svarin 2016: 131). This discourse of independence, sovereignty and holding the status of a great power is in line with what Lo (2015: 40) describes as the Russian elites' perceptions of 'a world defined as much by competition as cooperation; the primacy of hard power; the centrality of the great powers; and the abiding importance of geopolitics'.

Research suggests that the discourse about sovereignty is applied in an instrumental manner. On the one hand, in the post-Soviet space, Russia can use post-Westphalian arguments that invoke 'responsibility to protect' in order to intervene on the territory of other sovereign states (Deyermond 2016: 967-971; Lo 2015: 71-73). On the other hand, the rest of the world is expected to adhere to a Westphalian principle of non-interference in the domestic affairs of other states, including the Russian Federation (Deyermond 2016: 961-967). This instrumental emphasis on different ideas about sovereignty suggests that only a few great powers, in particular the United States (U.S.), China and Russia, are truly sovereign enough to 'to exercise genuinely independent choices' (Lo 2015: 41-42). These countries, in turn, should be recognized as powerful centres in the multipolar world that replaced the unipolar domination of the U.S. in the 1990s. These powerful centres have their own 'spheres of influence' or 'spheres of interest' upon which they can exert power (Lo 2015: 178; Smith 2016: 175).

The initial positioning of Russia in the world order after the collapse of the Soviet Union assumed its engagement with Western countries and integration into Western organizations. Russia's rapid economic growth in the first years of the 2000s following the 1998 financial crash elevated Russia to the status of a global rising power. Russia's improving economic situation was one of the factors that facilitated Putin's assertiveness in international relations (Kuchins 2015: 118). There has been a focus on developing new fora for cooperation in the post-Soviet space, such as the Customs Union (CU) and the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) in economic matters and the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) for security matters. At the same time, closer relations with other rising powers – China in particular – have been developed through bodies including the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and BRICS.

Based on these existing arguments in the extant literature summarized here, we have looked at how the discourse on sovereignty has been employed in the official documents and speeches analysed for this paper. We have also analysed how the position of Russia as a regional and global power during Putin's third term has been portrayed and the relative importance of particular countries, regions and international organizations in the official commentary on international relations in recent years.

2.3 Economics and modernization

It is our belief that to fully grasp the role Russia plays in its region, we need to explore how the economic and developmental offer is (or could be) perceived by Russia's neighbours. While there is literature that has examined how Russia can use economic leverage and influence to achieve its foreign policy goals (e.g. Gould-Davis 2016; Lo 2003: 51-71; Trenin 2011: 144-173), past studies of Russian foreign policy discourses seem to have paid far less attention to the self-ascribed role of Russia in the global economy and as a potential economic pole of attraction than to the issues of sovereignty and identity. This could be caused by the Russian foreign policy elites putting less emphasis on economic development and modernization in their discussions of international relations. It might also result from the choice of texts usually analysed by scholars, although it has been noted that 'international and intermestic economic concerns' feature in the presidents' Federal Assembly speeches (Ambrosio & Vandrovec 2013: 457). The scepticism of experts towards Russian economic plans might be a part of the explanation as to why Russian discourses on economic integration have been neglected in many analyses.

Scepticism about the economic ambitions proclaimed by Russia is not a valid reason for omitting economic discourses from the analysis of Russia's foreign policy narratives. Although countries from the CIS that cooperate with the Russian Federation tend to avoid political integration, they do pursue economic relations. This indicates that Russia might appeal to them more in the economic sphere rather than through political or cultural discourses (Smith 2016: 180). For many years Moscow placed a strong emphasis on promoting the integration of Ukraine into Russia-led regional economic bodies. For example, Russia presented the Customs Union as an opportunity to generate growth and support modernization, rather than appealing to historical or civilizational arguments (Dragneva & Wolczuk 2015b: 66-73).

The emphasis on the modernization of the Russian economy was particularly pronounced under President Dmitri Medvedev from 2008 to 2012. Deep social and political reform was supposed to improve the status of Russia as a global player competing with other powers, including the U.S., EU, and China, and to become 'one of the most influential global centres' (Freire & Simão 2015: 129). The discourse of the modernization of Russia's economy coupled with high GDP growth rates generated even more ambitious plans. These were reflected in the narratives of possible reform of the international financial institutions to grant stronger influence to non-Western powers, such as Russia (Lo 2015: 82-83).

In view of the limited attention paid to economic discourses in many earlier studies of Russian foreign policy documents, we have included a category on arguments and statements about a prosperous Russia, which might be perceived as a pole of attraction and a leader of regional economic integration.

The analysis we present later in this paper builds on the three clusters of studies on Russian foreign policy presented above. The next section will outline how we use these to categorize and code a selection of key foreign policy documents from Putin's third term as president.

3. Method and Approach

For the purpose of this analysis we have focused on two types of sources that communicate foreign policy ideas. The first are the three most recent official Foreign Policy Concepts of the Russian Federation, in 2008, 2013 and 2016, which are the ones that have been in force since Putin returned to the presidency in 2012. The second group of sources comprise the five annual Presidential Addresses to the Federal Assembly during Putin's third term from 2012 to 2016. These are delivered every December when the president addresses the two chambers of the Russian parliament. The speeches are comparable to the State of the Union address given by the U.S. president.

These are the most high-profile sources of Russian foreign policy discourses and their regular delivery allows longitudinal study over time. We acknowledge that these are not the sole sources of foreign policy discourses. In addition to the wider range of sources listed in Appendix A, there are the daily press releases and speeches by a huge range of actors in the Russian foreign policy apparatus – including the presidential administration, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, parliamentary Foreign Affairs Committees, prominent politicians and publicists, and think tanks with ties to the Kremlin (Gvosdev & Marsh 2013: 27-59). Given the structured approach we have taken, the other sources would be too labour intensive to include here and are beyond the scope of this paper.

We chose the Foreign Policy Concepts between 2008 and 2016 to arrive at an overview of official priorities set out for Russian foreign policy. For this purpose, we conducted a comprehensive analysis of the entire texts without focusing on one specific aspect of foreign policy. In doing so, we sought to avoid a bias towards one particular aspect of Russian foreign policy discourse. Instead, we aimed to estimate the frequency with which the different issues discussed above in section 2 actually appear and whether their prominence has changed over time.

In addition, we chose Putin's annual Addresses to the Federal Assembly between 2012 and 2016. These speeches are aimed at domestic audiences, but next to domestic developments, they cover a broad scope of issues in foreign policy. While the analysis of Foreign Policy Concepts will inform us about the stated priorities of Russian foreign policy, the analysis of these speeches complements these results. It informs us about the relative importance of particular foreign policy discourses on a year by year basis in one of the president's keynote public addresses. Furthermore we have extended previous quantitative analysis of the content of Federal Assembly speeches, which was carried out up to and including the Address in 2011 (Ambrosio & Vandrovec 2013).

Table 1. Categories and codes used in the content analysis

General category	Specific codes
Sovereignty and power	*World order:* economic; security; international bodies and laws; global and civilizational multipolarity *Sovereignty*: the state sovereignty of Russia and others countries as well as the right to act in a sovereign manner *Regional sphere of influence or interest:* security; Russia-led regional bodies
Civilization and identity	*Russian/Eurasian identity and culture*: promoting and protecting Russian culture, common cultural space, compatriots *Russia as 'authentic Europe'*: defending traditional values *European/universal values*
Prosperity	*Russia's globalization and modernization*: an economic pole of attraction *Eurasian Economic Union*: economic integration in the post-Soviet region

Source: Authors

The codes used to analyse the texts are presented in Table 1 and were chosen based on deduction (literature review) and fine-tuned through induction (thorough reading of the primary texts). The process of coding was conducted as follows: the authors served as coders – one coder analysed the texts in English and the other in Russian. The coders discussed every paragraph of each document after coding them separately. Where the text was coded differently, the coders compared their interpretations and reached agreement on the most suitable code. Where necessary, this included discussing meaning of the original Russian text to ascertain the intention of the authors.

Inevitably there is potential for overlap between categories, so codes were assigned to individual sentences or, where agreed necessary, to individual clauses and not just whole paragraphs. In that way, while a paragraph may focus on Eurasian economic integration overall, references to sovereignty or the global economic order that may emerge within it are not overlooked. In cases of overlap, the coders took into account the context of particular phrases or their position within a larger argument and agreed on the most appropriate code for the text in that sentence.

Percentages were calculated based on word counts. The complete breakdowns of the coding for the Foreign Policy Concepts and for the Presidential Addresses to the Federal Assembly are available in Appendices B and C. The following section will present the results of the analysis of the Foreign Policy Concepts, before moving to the analysis of the Federal Assembly addresses in section 5.

4. Analysis of the Foreign Policy Concepts of the Russian Federation

The three Foreign Policy Concepts (FPC) developed in the past decade all follow a similar template. They each begin with some basic general principles and provisions. These are followed by a statement on the foreign policy of the Russian Federation in the modern world. The next two sections highlight Russia's priorities in addressing

global problems, and then specify the country's regional foreign policy priorities. Finally, there is a section on foreign policy formation and implementation.

Our analysis shows that the frequency of references to the specific categories of foreign policy discourse presented in Table 1 remain relatively constant across all three FPCs, reflecting this stable format. Our analysis illustrates how the discourse on Russian foreign policy has developed over time in the three thematic areas we derived from the literature discussion: Russia as a global and regional power and its sovereignty, Russian perspectives on civilization and identity, and finally a prosperous Russia as an economic pole of attraction. An overall summary is presented in Table 2.[2]

Table 2. Percentage of total text in Foreign Policy Concepts devoted to each discourse category

Categories	2008	2013	2016
Sovereignty and power			
World order	51 %	47 %	53 %
Sovereignty	4 %	6 %	7 %
Regional sphere of influence	6 %	7 %	6 %
Civilization and identity			
Russian/Eurasian identity	6 %	7 %	6 %
Universal/European values	3 %	5 %	3 %
Prosperity			
Russia's economic globalization	7 %	6 %	5 %
Eurasian economic integration	2 %	2 %	2 %
Uncategorized[3]	21 %	20 %	18 %

Source: Authors

4.1 Russia's sovereignty and place in the world

We begin with the category that has the most attention devoted to it in the FPCs. Overall, around half of the content of each FPC is dedicated to various issues of the international world order. The balance between the relative sub-categories coded under 'world order' remains similar in each FPC, as shown in Table 3. The most significant change is the steady increase in the focus on issues of international security across the three documents. The 2008 FPC predates the conflict between Russia and Georgia over South Ossetia and the 2016 FPC comes in the wake of the ongoing conflicts in both Ukraine and Syria.

[2] A full breakdown of the coding and the calculations of word counts for each category can be found in Appendix B.

[3] This includes headers, general text about the competencies of institutions in shaping and conducting Russian foreign policy, discussion of climate change and the environment, and references to single countries that did not relate to any of the other categories.

Table 3. Percentage of text coded 'world order' by sub-category in Foreign Policy Concepts

World Order Sub-Categories	2008	2013	2016
World order in general	31 %	19 %	24 %
Economic world order	8 %	11 %	10 %
Security world order	34 %	40 %	43 %
International bodies and law	23 %	24 %	19 %
Civilizational multipolarity	4 %	6 %	4 %

Source: Authors

In the discussion of the world order, the 2008 FPC makes it clear that 'a new Russia … has now acquired a full-fledged role in global affairs' and implies that Russia was returning to great power status thanks to its 'strengthening position'. The 2013 FPC suggests that the West's ability to dominate the world economy and politics is diminishing and a new polycentric system is emerging. By the time of the 2016 FPC, this transition is described as almost complete. Throughout the 2016 FPC, there are new references to the failings or decline in power of the U.S. and the EU. The Euro-Atlantic region is described as having systemic problems and posing a threat to regional and global stability. Rather than making the case that deep-rooted ties with Europe should inform Russia's relations with the EU as seen in the 2013 FPC, the most recent FPC underlines that separate European and Eurasian integration processes need to better harmonize with each other. According to the 2016 FPC, the desire of Western countries to regain their dominant position by imposing their views on others is leading to turbulence and instability in the world.

The number of paragraphs dedicated to building relations with the U.S., which remained stable between the 2008 and 2013 FPC, was dramatically reduced in the 2016 FPC. Earlier references in the 2013 FPC to visa liberalization and preventing the imposition of sanctions are absent in the 2016 version. The main emphasis in 2016 is on arms control. The 2016 FPC contains an explicit statement that relations can only be built on a basis of equality, mutual respect of interests and non-interference in the internal affairs of each other. It is made clear that while Russia is interested in good relations, it reserves the right to respond harshly to what it perceives as any attempts by the U.S. to exert military, political, economic or other pressure.

The emphasis on China has not in fact increased in the discourses presented in the FPCs between 2008 and 2016. In the section on 'regional priorities' in each document, China is only mentioned after the CIS countries, Europe, and the U.S. In the 2008 FPC, China is only mentioned in the same paragraph as India. The importance of China slightly increased in the 2013 and 2016 FPCs, where there is one paragraph devoted to China alone. It refers to the 'common principled approaches adopted by the two countries to addressing the key issues on the global agenda as one of the core elements of regional stability', as stated in 2016 FPC. The discourses in both the FPCs and, as will be shown later, in the presidential speeches, focuses on the Asia-Pacific region in general rather than the re-emergence of China as a global power.

Turning to references of Russia's sphere of influence and interests, Table 2 has shown that these topics make up around six percent of the entire text of each FPC. When looking at the sub-categories referring to ideas of regional influence, issues of security are constantly the most prominent, as shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Percentage of text coded 'regional influence' by sub-category in Foreign Policy Concepts

Regional Influence Sub-Categories	2008	2013	2016
Regional influence in general	19 %	28 %	20 %
Security regional influence	55 %	53 %	50 %
Regional bodies and organizations	26 %	19 %	30 %

Source: Authors

In general the three FPCs call for 'good neighbourly relations' with adjacent countries (although these countries are not explicitly named) that are willing to engage in mutually beneficial cooperation while taking into account Russia's 'legitimate interests'. The 2008 FPC, for example, offers the prospect of multilateral dialogue and 'multidimensional cooperation'. As an umbrella organization, the CIS is mentioned in all three FPCs, although as will be discussed later in section 4.3, it had lost ground to mentions of the EAEU by 2016. The Union State of Russian and Belarus (USRB) is only mentioned in an economic context in the 2008 FPC. The two subsequent FPCs, however, stress the promotion of 'integration in all areas'. Belarus is explicitly mentioned in the second paragraph in the section on 'regional priorities' and earns a paragraph in its own right in the 2016 FPC. This is different from the 2013 FPC, in which the USRB is relegated to a sub-section of a paragraph.

Unsurprisingly, the coverage of Ukraine has also changed. In the 2013 FPC there is a call for Ukraine to be a priority partner in extended integration processes. In the 2016 FPC a much longer entry calls for the development of a variety of 'political, economic, cultural and spiritual ties' with Ukraine on the basis of mutual respect and their national interests, but no longer links Ukraine to regional integration processes. The 2016 FPC promises that Russia will make the necessary efforts for a political and diplomatic settlement of what it terms the 'internal conflict in Ukraine'.

An important emphasis in the FPCs since 2008 has been on security in the neighbourhood, making up the bulk of references to Russia's sphere of interest. This includes cooperation through the Russian-led regional security bodies – the CSTO and SCO. Issues of common interest listed include terrorism, extremism, transnational crime, and illegal migration. Russia is presented as a security provider through peacekeeping missions in the post-Soviet space. This is also the only occasion when Moldova is explicitly named in any of the FPCs, in the context of the status of separatist Transnistria. Afghanistan is named as a common security risk for Russia and its neighbours. In the 2008 FPC it is only presented as a threat to the southern CIS countries, but by 2016 it is named as a major threat to Russia and other CIS members, requiring possible input from Eurasian security bodies alongside other international organizations to help resolve it.

Furthermore, any perceived NATO encroachment in Russia's sphere of influence is heavily criticized. The prospect of admitting Ukraine and Georgia to the Euro-Atlantic alliance is directly referenced in the FPC 2008, but in the 2013 and 2016 FPCs no specific countries are named. By then, Russia had intervened militarily in Georgia and Ukraine. The 2008 FPC criticizes talk of expansion as undermining 'the effectiveness of joint work' between Russia and NATO, whereas in 2016 the FPC condemns NATO's 'growing military activity in the regions neighbouring Russia'. Any talk of cooperation with NATO has disappeared from the 2016 document.

Importantly, references to Russia's right (and that of other countries') to be a sovereign state and act in a sovereign manner on the international stage increased across the FPCs between 2008 and 2016. Nevertheless, as Table 2 above shows, the proportion of text dedicated to sovereignty is similar to the proportion of text devoted to other areas, including Russia's economic globalization, the regional sphere of influence, and Russian and Eurasian identity.

An interpretation of sovereignty that emphasizes the exclusive right of each state to decide about its internal affairs and to treat its citizens as they wish can be identified in the 2016 FPC with regard to Syria: 'Russia supports the unity, independence and territorial integrity of the Syrian Arab Republic as a secular, democratic and pluralistic State [sic] with all ethnic and religious groups living in peace and security and enjoying equal rights and opportunities.' This interpretation is not applied to all countries, however. References to the inviable sovereignty of Georgia and Ukraine are conspicuous in their absence. Georgia is not mentioned as a country whose territorial integrity was breached when South Ossetia and Abkhazia were recognized as independent by Russia after a military conflict. Tellingly, Crimea is not even mentioned in the 2016 FPC, although it is referred to in the discussion of Russia's domestic affairs in the Presidential Addresses to the Federation Assembly, as will be noted in section 5.

Another way in which the FPCs refer to sovereignty concerns the right to act in a sovereign manner in the international arena. On multiple occasions, the FPCs mention Russia's right to pursue its interests in international politics and economy – usually linked with some sort of international legal framework. As an illustration of this, the 2016 FPC states that Russia 'in accordance with international norms and principles, adopts the necessary trade policy measures to protect national interests and effectively respond to unfriendly economic actions by foreign states that infringe upon the rights of the Russian Federation or Russian business entities.'

4.2 Civilization, identity and values from a Russian perspective

In recent years there has been a growing focus on a possible 'conservative' or 'civilizational' turn in Russian politics (Laruelle 2016; Linde 2016; Robinson 2017; Sharafutdinova 2014). However, based on the analysis carried out here, we do not find any significant increase in references to a special Russian civilizational identity across the three FPCs. Regardless of the importance of such discourses in domestic political discourse, they have not yet taken on extra prominence in the FPCs. Furthermore, when identity, norms and values are invoked, in approximately one third of the cases the FPCs still refer to universal standards rather than any specific Russian ones, even in 2016.

The documents make reference to 'the full universality of generally recognized norms' and 'universal democratic values, including protection of human rights and freedoms' (FPC 2008). All three FPCs condemn racial discrimination and anti-Semitism in particular, but do not mention other forms of discrimination. The 2008 FPC notes that the rights of the Russian-speaking population in the Baltic states should be protected in accordance with European norms. All three FPCs contain pledges to support international human rights conventions and agreements, as well as work with bodies such as the Council of Europe (CoE). Nevertheless, each FPC suggests that it is necessary to eradicate 'double standards' in the area of universal human rights. There is a reference to promoting 'Russia's approach to human rights issues' in the 2013 FPC although it is not explained what that means in practice and similar references are absent from the 2008 and 2016 FPCs.

The discourse on Russian civilization and identity is similar across all three FPCs. Russia reserves the right to provide 'comprehensive protection' for compatriots abroad in the 2008 and 2013 FPCs and this becomes 'comprehensive, effective protection' in the 2016 FPC. The documents promise to expand and strengthen the space for Russian language and culture. Similarly, all three FPCs emphasize the need to promote an objective image of Russian accomplishments across a variety of spheres, and to counter the selective use of history or attempts by (unnamed) outside forces to manipulate public opinion under the guise of 'soft power'. In the later FPCs there is a greater emphasis on the need to 'promote Russian and Russian-language media in the global information space'.

It is interesting to note that the term 'Russian World' is in fact only mentioned once, in the 2008 FPC. Nor is there any mention of a specific Eurasian identity. The 2013 and 2016 FPCs both mention the need to develop 'interstate cultural and humanitarian ties between Slavic peoples', but how the definition of Slavic peoples should be understood is not stated. The 2008 and 2013 FPCs reference the 'common cultural and civilizational heritage' of the CIS countries and later this becomes their 'common cultural and historical legacy' in the 2016 FPC. Whether this commonality should be interpreted as Russian, (post-)Soviet, or Eurasian is left unsaid.

None of the FPCs place a strong emphasis on the ROC, although each notes the need for the spiritual education of the population. Where the ROC is mentioned, it is in the context of collaboration with other confessions in a multipolar world of diverse civilizations.

4.3 Prosperity and Russia as an economic pole of attraction

The research conducted for this paper reveals that the portrayal of Russia as a potential economic pole of attraction is indeed important in the analysed documents. Despite having attracted relatively little attention in the literature on Russian foreign policy discourses, economic discourses are in fact just as prominent in all three FPCs as expressions of a particular Russian identity or Eurasian civilization. In all three FPCs just under ten per cent of the text is dedicated to issues that the authors coded as prosperity, while just over ten per cent discussed issues of civilization and identity, as shown in Table 2. This cautions against an overemphasis of any 'civilizational turn' in Russian foreign policy discourse.

The projection of Russia as a driver of regional economic integration is a constant and recurring argument, dating back to the 2008 FPC. The focus in the earlier FPC was on relations within the CIS in terms of trade and economics. Particular emphasis is given to Belarus and Kazakhstan as partners, which continues in the 2013 and 2016 FPCs. In later FPCs, the focus shifts away from the CIS and moves to first establishing (FPC 2013) and then expanding (FPC 2016) the EAEU. In the 2016 FPC, the foreign policy ambitions of the authorities for the EAEU include harmonization with Europe and complementary projects in the Asia-Pacific region.

When presenting Russia as a prosperous prospective partner in the world economy, there are again common themes in all three FPCs. Each has a section on international cooperation in the sphere of the economy, emphasizing the modernization of Russia, the transformation of its economy, and its innovation-based development. Russia is portrayed as possessing 'real capacity to play a well-deserved role globally' (FPC 2008) and an ability to make a 'considerable contribution to ensuring the stability of the global economy and finances'

(FPC 2013). Each FPC promises that Russia will integrate with the world economy, develop foreign economic and investment links, and strengthen strategic partnerships. The 2008 FPC proposes that Russia will help develop a 'just and democratic architecture of global trade, monetary and financial relations' through pursuing membership of the World Trade Organization (WTO) and Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). By the time of publication of the 2016 FPC, when Russia had become a member of the WTO, the document promises to 'contribute to the efficiency of the multilateral trade system'. In the 2013 and 2016 FPC, the importance of Russia's geographic location is mentioned, highlighting the opportunity to facilitate trade between Europe and the Asia-Pacific region.

One noticeable change over time is the attitude towards international development. The 2008 and 2013 FPCs state that Russia is pursuing active and targeted policies as a donor at both the multilateral and bilateral level. All mention of this has disappeared in the 2016 FPC, implying that its authors might be reigning in their ambitions and promises to potential partners in the developing world. This particular topic also demonstrated the importance of checking the English and Russian texts in order to catch and interpret nuances. In English, the 2008 FPC refers to 'donor capacity' while the 2013 FPC references 'donor potential', suggesting a subtle downgrade in importance. The original Russian in both texts, however, refers only to 'donor potential'.

Overall, the emphasis on Russia as a regional economic power is constant in all three FPCs, amounting to about two per cent of the entire text in each. The focus is on regional integration organizations, with the emphasis shifting from the CIS in 2008 to the EAEU in 2016. There is a slight decline in the amount of text which refers to Russia as an active participant in a globalized economy. The only significant absence in the 2016 FPC is the lack of mention of international development assistance. Otherwise, it appears that the discussion of international economic cooperation is simply presented in a more succinct manner than in earlier FPCs.

5. Analysis of the Presidential Addresses to the Federal Assembly

The Constitution of the Russian Federation grants the president the right to define foreign policy guidelines and represent the country in international relations. As such, the language employed in Putin's speeches after his return to the presidency can provide additional insights into Russian foreign policy discourse. These speeches are also more likely to get extensive media coverage in Russia and the region, reaching a wider audience than regular press releases from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or other sources noted earlier in section 3. Unlike the Foreign Policy Concepts discussed above, there is far less consistency in how much attention is paid to particular foreign policy discourses in the annual Federal Assembly speeches.

Unsurprisingly, the speech with the largest proportion of time dedicated to the foreign policy discourses analysed in this paper is in December 2014, in the wake of the annexation of Crimea into the Russian Federation and the response from the West. Issues of sovereignty, regional influence and Russian identity are particularly prominent in that address to parliament. The following year on the other hand, 2015, was the one in which the most emphasis was placed on Russia as a potential economic pole of attraction out of any of the speeches so far in

Putin's third term. This may have indicated a desire to present Russia as prosperous in spite of Western economic sanctions. An overall summary is presented in Table 5.[4]

Table 5. Percentage of total text in Presidential Addresses devoted to each discourse category

Categories	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Sovereignty & power					
World order	4.2 %	9.0 %	6. 5 %	3.9 %	9.2 %
Sovereignty	2.9 %	2.3 %	12.3 %	3.2 %	2.0 %
Regional sphere of influence	1.8 %	1.4 %	3.8 %	0.9 %	0.3 %
Civilization & identity					
Russian/Eurasian identity	13.5 %	5.6 %	5.6 %	3.2%	4.3 %
Universal/European values	0.6 %	0.3 %	0.0 %	0.0%	0.9 %
Prosperity					
Russia's economic globalization	2.4 %	3.4 %	3.5 %	5.1 %	2.0 %
Eurasian economic integration	1.2 %	2.5 %	1.3 %	0.4 %	0.5 %
TOTAL FOR ALL CATEGORIES	**26.5 %**	**24.5 %**	**33.0 %**	**16.7 %**	**19.2 %**

Source: Authors

5.1 Russia's sovereignty and place in the world

Table 6 shows the number of times specific regions were mentioned in the speeches that we analysed. This was calculated based on references to the region itself, or to an international organization located in that region.[5] During Putin's third term, mentions of Eurasia have far outstripped those of any other region, with on average twice as many mentions as Europe. This continues a trend that Ambrosio and Vandrovic first noted in the speeches from 2010 onwards, when Eurasia first supplanted Europe with the most mentions (2013: 443). The exception to this trend is the 2014 address. In the aftermath of Euromaidan in Ukraine, the incorporation of Crimea into the Russian Federation and the eruption of conflict in eastern Ukraine, Putin's frequent mentions of Europe were to condemn its actions.

[4] A full breakdown of the coding and the calculations of word counts for each category can be found in Appendix C.

[5] The Shanghai Cooperation Organization, which includes republics in post-Soviet Eurasia as well as China, was included in the results for both Eurasia and the Asia-Pacific region. This followed the example set by Ambrosio and Vandrovec (2013: 465).

Table 6. Frequencies of references to particular regions in Presidential Addresses

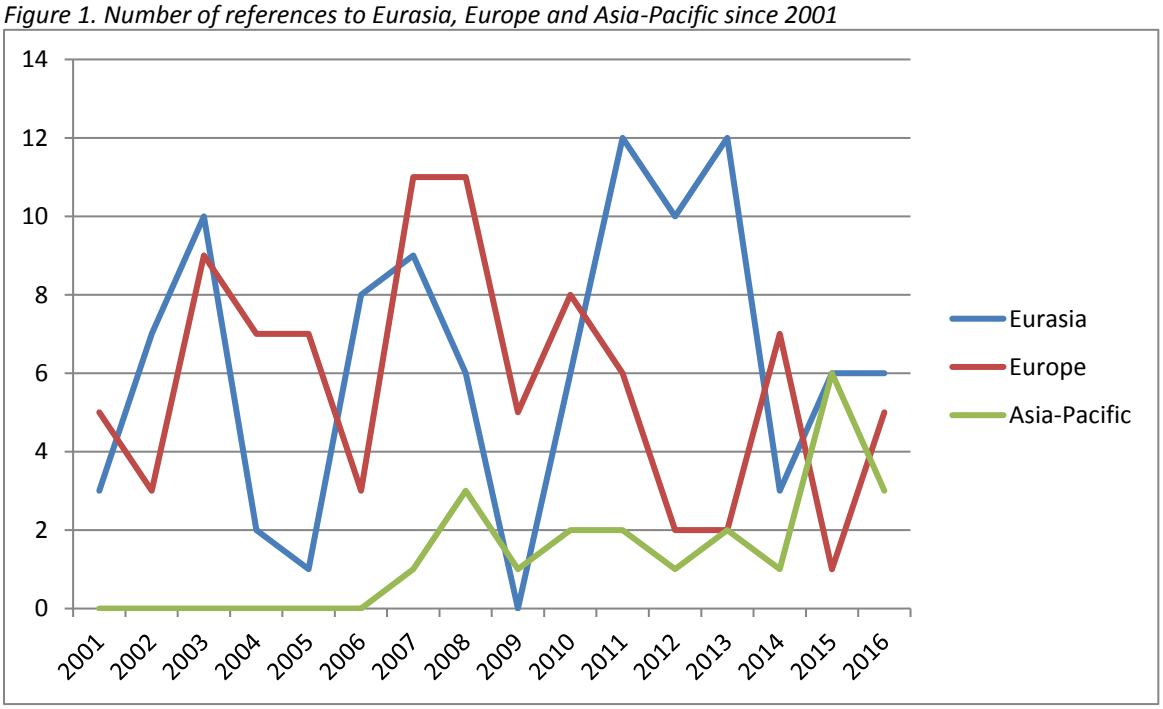
NAME	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	TOTAL
Eurasia (including CIS, CU, EAEU, CSTO, SCO)	10	12	3	6	6	**38**
Europe (including EU)	2	2	7	1	5	**17**
Asia-Pacific (including SCO, APEC, ASEAN)	1	2	1	6	3	**14**
Middle East	-	1	1	1	-	**3**
Arctic	1	-	2	-	-	**3**
South America	1	-	1	-	-	**2**
Africa	-	-	1	-	-	**1**
Euro-Atlantic (including NATO)	-	-	-	-	-	**0**

Source: Authors

Furthermore our findings highlight an absence of mentions of the Euro-Atlantic region including NATO. This was the third most frequently mentioned region in Ambrosio and Vandrovec's earlier study of presidential addresses from 2000 to 2011, which coincided with an era of active NATO enlargement from 1999 to 2009.

Moscow's emphasis on a 'pivot to Asia' is illustrated by a gradual increase in mentions of the region, particularly in the wake of Western economic sanctions in 2014, when Putin began to emphasize alternative options open to Russia in the East. Our analysis shows that the number of mentions of the Asia-Pacific region in the five years from 2012 to 2016 are double those for the five-year period from 2007 when the region was first mentioned in a presidential address (Ambrosio & Vandrovec 2013: 442). A balance in mentions of Europe and the Asia-Pacific region may be emerging, if the results from the most recent address in 2016 become the standard. This may reflect Moscow giving equal weight to different poles in its rhetoric about a multipolar world, as represented in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Number of references to Eurasia, Europe and Asia-Pacific since 2001



Source for 2001-2011 is Ambrosio and Vandrovec (2013: 443), 2012-2016 is authors' own

Table 7 shows the number of mentions international organizations received in the five speeches by Putin. Unsurprisingly following on from Table 6, organizations in post-Soviet Eurasia predominate: the CIS, the Customs Union (CU) of Russian, Belarus and Kazakhstan which then transformed into the EAEU, the CSTO and the SCO. Regional economic bodies (CU/EAEU) are mentioned more than twice as often as regional security bodies (CSTO, SCO) over the entire period analysed, however, this gap has narrowed since the EAEU was actually launched in 2015. Similarly, international economic bodies (BRICS, G8, G20, WTO) are mentioned almost twice as often as regional security bodies. References to eastward-facing organizations (ASEAN, APEC, SCO) have outnumbered those to the EU or NATO across all five speeches. These findings corroborate the trends identified in earlier studies of presidential addresses (Ambrosio & Vandrovec 2013: 445).

Table 7. Frequencies of references to particular international organizations in Presidential Addresses

NAME	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	TOTAL
CIS	5	5	1	1	1	**14**
EAEU/CU	5	4	2	1	1	**13**
EU	-	-	2	-	2	**4**
SCO	-	1	-	2	1	**4**
UN	-	-	2	1	1	**4**
G20	1	1	-	-	1	**3**
G8	-	2	-	-	-	**2**
BRICS	-	1	-	-	1	**2**
ASEAN	-	-	-	2	-	**2**
APEC	-	-	-	-	1	**1**
CSTO	-	-	-	-	1	**1**
WTO	1	-	-	-	-	**1**
NATO	-	-	-	-	-	**0**

Source: Authors

Table 8 presents the geographic scope of individual counties mentioned more than once in the five speeches analysed.[6] Some specific events are responsible for spikes in mentions: for example, the large number of mentions of Turkey can be attributed to the shooting down of a Russian warplane by the Turkish air force in December 2015, shortly before that year's address to the Federal Assembly. Particular attention was paid to Ukraine during Euromaidan in 2013 and after the annexation of Crimea and the outbreak of fighting in Donbas in 2014, but since then Ukraine has been ignored in these speeches. The only countries in Russia's so-called 'sphere of privileged interest' that warrant a specific mention are Belarus and Kazakhstan, reflecting their status in the vanguard of Eurasian integration in the run up to the establishment of the EAEU in 2015.

[6] Other countries mentioned once in the five speeches are Afghanistan, Austria, Canada, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Egypt, Finland, France, Georgia, Greece, Iraq, Italy, Japan, Lebanon, Libya, Mali, Portugal, South Korea, Spain and Vietnam.

References to and comparisons with the U.S. are a familiar constant. While NATO and the Euro-Atlantic region have not been referenced in Putin's speeches since 2012, the U.S. still is. The only other Western country mentioned more than once in the same period is Germany.

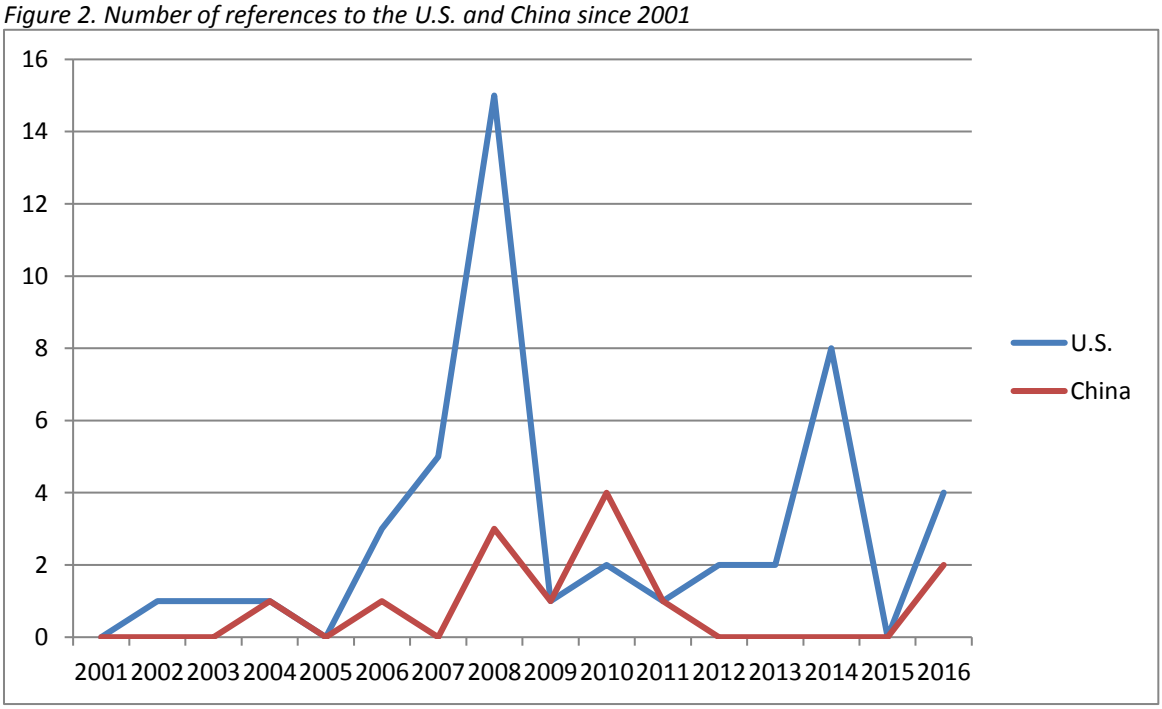
Table 8. Frequencies of references to particular countries in Presidential Addresses

NAME	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	TOTAL
Ukraine	1	4	17	-	-	**22**
United States	2	2	8	-	4	**16**
Syria	-	7	-	7	1	**15**
Turkey	-	-	-	6	-	**6**
Belarus	1	2	-	-	-	**3**
Kazakhstan	1	2	-	-	-	**3**
China	-	-	-	-	2	**2**
India	-	-	-	-	2	**2**
Germany	-	1	-	-	1	**2**

Source: Authors

On the other hand, while references to the Asia-Pacific region and eastward-facing organizations have been increasing, this has not been reflected in direct mentions of China. References to China still lag behind references to the U.S., as shown in Figure 2. It should be noted that the references to the U.S. are also influenced by specific events – tensions over Georgia in 2008 and Ukraine in 2014.

Figure 2. Number of references to the U.S. and China since 2001



Source for 2001-2011 is Ambrosio and Vandrovec (2013: 444), 2012-2016 is authors' own

References to sovereignty and the right to act in a sovereign manner in a variety of ways have appeared in all the addresses to the Federal Assembly since Putin returned to the presidency. His speech in 2012 focuses on factors

that would guarantee Russia's sovereignty in the 21st century, not only aiming to preserve Russia's geopolitical relevance, but also to generate 'demand among our neighbours and partners'. In addition, the speech emphasizes that 'unity, integrity and sovereignty are unconditional' and expressions of separatism were not welcome. Nor is any 'direct or indirect foreign interference in our internal political processes' tolerated. The following year, Putin promises that Russia also respects the sovereignty of other countries: 'we do not claim to be any sort of superpower with a claim to global or regional hegemony; we do not encroach on anyone's interests, impose our patronage onto anyone, or try to teach others how to live their lives.'

The 2014 Federal Assembly speech touches on sovereignty in a variety of ways. Russia had 'supported' and 'facilitated' Ukraine's aspirations for sovereignty in the 1990s. President Yanukovych had been a legitimate head of state, who was perfectly entitled to postpone signing any Association Agreement between Ukraine and the EU. America is charged with meddling 'behind the scenes' in Russia's neighbourhood. European countries are accused of treating sovereignty as 'too much of a luxury', while 'true sovereignty for Russia is absolutely necessary'. Putin speaks of supporters of separatism 'from across the pond' who would have gladly seen the 'dismemberment' of Russia, but Russia had remained a sovereign nation. In the same speech, however, Russia is presented as having the right to support the 'historical reunification' of Crimea with Russia following a 'resolution on sovereignty', even when this went against the indivisibility and integrity of the Ukrainian state.

By 2015 the focus of the annual address has shifted from Ukraine to Syria, and with it Russia's sovereign right to wage 'an expressly open, direct struggle against international terrorism', which was based on 'an official request from the legitimate Syrian authorities'. This was necessary because other (unnamed) countries had sought to undermine state sovereignty in the Middle East and North Africa though a desire to 'oust unwanted regimes and brutally impose their own rules'.

In general terms, the speeches rarely emphasize Russia's regional sphere of influence to the same extent as the FPCs do, beyond economic integration addressed below in section 5.3. The CIS as a regional organization is only mentioned in the 2012 address, but rather than focus on multidimensional forms of cooperation as explained earlier in the analysis of the FPCs, Putin's speech actually emphasizes providing assistance to ensure effective immigration controls. In 2013 he vows to 'preserve our special ties with the former Soviet republics' but wants new regulations for employing foreign workers to control migration flows.

Naturally, the speech in December 2014 is particularly clear about placing Ukraine within Russia's sphere of influence and Crimea being part of the Russian Federation. Putin poses a number of rhetorical questions asking what the EU and the West have done for Ukraine and suggests that they have been unable to provide the assistance Ukraine needed. By contrast, Russia would have been able to offer assistance had there been an attempt to engage in dialogue earlier. Curiously, Ukraine is never mentioned in the annual addresses after that.

The authors continued to code mentions of Crimea after that speech as examples of re-defining Russia's sphere of influence, rather than domestic politics. The speeches, however, refer to Crimea purely in the domestic politics context of Russia. Crimea is one of only a handful of regions in Russia that get named in the speeches. This is always in the context of the need to create 'favourable conditions' (2014) in the peninsula through 'projects of national importance' (2016) such as the construction of a bridge to Crimea. It illustrates the argument that for

all the talk of sovereignty described above, this idea of sovereignty did not extend to Ukraine as part of Russia's 'near abroad'.

The regional security of Russia and the CIS countries are mentioned in the December 2015 speech, shortly after Russia had begun its military operations in Syria. Putin argues: 'We must fight and eliminate them [militants] there, away from home' before they potentially return to Russia's sphere of influence.

5.2 Civilization and identity discourses

Unlike the three FPCs since 2008, in which universal or, to a lesser extent, European identities and values have still found a place in discourse on civilization and identity, this is not reflected as strongly in Putin's annual addresses. Even when they are mentioned, they are usually tempered by certain Russian exceptions. So when the speech from December 2012 mentions Russia sharing 'universal democratic principles adopted worldwide', the text immediately proceeds to qualify that by adding that 'Russian democracy means the power of the Russian people with their own traditions of self-rule and not the fulfilment of standards imposed on us from outside'.

Putin's speechwriters are fond of quoting or invoking authors, philosophers or scholars in his annual addresses when he talks of Russian identity and civilization. These include Solzhenitsyn (2012), Bardyaev (2013), Karamzin (2015) and Losev (2016). Putin devotes the most attention to identity in his first address to the Federal Assembly after his re-election in 2012: 'We should preserve our national and spiritual identity, not lose our sense of national unity. We must be and remain Russia.' In the speech he argues that 'many moral guides have been lost' and there is an 'apparent deficit of spiritual values'. Educational, cultural and youth policies would create 'a responsible Russian citizen'. Furthermore, he urges the simplification of procedures to obtain citizenship for 'the bearers of the Russian language and culture, the direct descendants of those who were born in the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union'.

The annual address in 2014 devotes significant time to Crimea as 'the spiritual source of the development of a multifaceted but solid Russian nation'. The indivisibility of Russia and Crimea is invoked early in the speech: 'In addition to ethnic similarity, a common language, common elements of their material culture, a common territory, even though its borders were not marked then, and a nascent common economy and government.' Moreover, 'Christianity was a powerful spiritual unifying force that helped involve various tribes and tribal unions of the vast Eastern Slavic world in the creation of a Russian nation and Russian state.'

In other years, there are regular references to the need to defend Russia's 'national interests, history, traditions and values' (2015) as well as the 'all-encompassing, unifying role of Russian culture history and language for our multi-ethnic population' (2013). In the sphere of education in particular, such references are extended to citizens in neighbouring countries and the need to 'strengthen Russia's cultural and intellectual influence' (2013). It is actually in this context, with foreign students coming to study at Russian universities or via distance learning, that compatriots living outside of Russia have been mentioned in these speeches.

It is interesting to note that in none of these speeches is the term 'Russian world' explicitly used. Nor do they refer to any form of Eurasianism as discussed in the literature above. In his references to Russia's 'millennium-long history and great traditions, as a nation consolidated by common values and common goals', Putin does

refer to spiritual issues and moral standards far more than they are ever raised in the official FPCs. This suggests that the so-called 'conservative turn' in the Russian official discourse is aimed more at the domestic audience than at the international one. This does not mean that elites or publics in neighbouring countries are not paying attention to such statements.

5.3 Prosperity and Russia as an economic pole of attraction

As has been posited throughout this paper, the economic dimension of Russian foreign policy discourse risks being overlooked. We have demonstrated above in section 4 that it is just as prominent in all three official FPC documents as any discussions of civilization or identity. In speeches by Putin himself, it might have been anticipated that he prefers to use discourses that would reflect a civilizational turn in foreign policy. However, while that would appear to be the case in his first speech after re-election for a third term in 2012, that trend has not been maintained since then. Based on our analysis, issues of prosperity are just as important as civilization and identity in the annual addresses from 2013 onwards, mirroring what is seen in the FPCs.

The economic integration in the region is the key element of the discourse on prosperity. The goal of a Eurasian Economic Union was first announced during Putin's pre-election campaign and he dedicates the most attention to it in the speeches in the years leading up to its establishment in 2015. The most space is devoted to Eurasian economic integration during the address in 2013. The prospect of signing an EAEU Treaty with Belarus and Kazakhstan in the following year is celebrated, as is the possibility of Armenia and Kyrgyzstan acceding to the Customs Union. The speech notes that 'the real achievements of Eurasian integration will only enhance our other neighbours' interest in it, including that of our Ukrainian partners.' Putin promises that the process will proceed 'without setting it against other integration projects, including the more mature European one'. However, since the launch of the EAEU in January 2015, its prominence in annual addresses has declined. The speech in December 2016 mentions strengthening EAEU cooperation with other CIS countries and briefly acknowledges the idea of a 'Greater Eurasian Partnership'. Although the implications of this change are not yet clear, it might be that the integration within the EAEU is too narrow (or too shallow) to accomplish the economic goals of both Russia and other members of the organization without developing stronger economic cooperation with other actors such as China.

When deciding on how to identify examples of Russia's economic globalization in the annual addresses, the coders agreed that it was not enough to simply code all mentions of the Russian economy, which usually makes up a significant part of any address to the Federal Assembly. Instead, it was agreed that coding would only be applied to comments that could be seen as portraying Russia as an economic pole of attraction, even though it might not be explicitly expressed as such. Examples of this include references to building a 'rich and prosperous Russia' (2012) that 'works towards prosperity and affluence' (2014), a country 'in the group of 20 nations with the best business climate' (2012) and that 'counts among the world's five biggest economies' (2013). Calls to welcome foreign investors and educated professionals were coded under this category, as were references to Russia's international competitiveness, global innovation and opportunities for partners to work with the country's modernizing economy. In 2015 in particular, there is an emphasis in the speech on 'holding consultations' and to 'open new possibilities' in the Asia-Pacific region, in a bid to 'work out a mutually beneficial agenda for cooperation'. Such ambitious talk of leading an economic partnership in the region is gone the

following year, nevertheless the speech in December 2016 is the first in which Putin directly mentions China, as it 'is about to become the world's largest economy'. It remains to be seen whether Russia's success as an economic power will be more explicitly linked to ties with China in the discourse during the coming years.

6. Conclusions

The Russian foreign policy documents from Putin's third term as president analysed in this paper do not cover every possible source of foreign policy discourse from every possible player in the Russian elite. Nevertheless, given the centralized and hierarchical nature of the Russian political system, the analysis provides valuable insights into ongoing trends in the most high-profile sources of foreign policy discourses. We build on past studies that have analysed similar sources. While acknowledging the fact that a gap can exist between rhetoric, informal policies and practice in Russian foreign policy, it is important to understand what foreign policy discourses are being projected to audiences in the countries of interest for EU-STRAT, namely Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine. These official discourses do not exist in isolation of course. They join other foreign policy messages disseminated in the media, through propaganda, and via various formal and informal gatekeepers or channels of communication that will be examined elsewhere in the EU-STRAT project.

In our analysis of the FPCs, we demonstrate that there is a great deal of continuity in the amount of space dedicated to the discourses under investigation in each document. There has been an emphasis on security issues at both the regional and global level, with the latter in particular garnering ever more attention over time. While our review of the existing studies on Russian foreign policy discourse notes that they have paid particular attention to questions of a Russia identity or Eurasian civilization, this is not especially pronounced in the FPCs in comparison to other categories identified. Similarly there has not been a decline in mentions of universal values, although these are often tempered by underlining the need to protect Russia's national interests. Significantly, economic foreign policy discourses are no less important than civilizational ones in all three FPCs.

With regard to our quantitative analysis of Federal Assembly speeches, we see an equal weighting emerging in the mentions of Eurasia, Europe and the Asia-Pacific region. While security discourses predominate in the FPCs, there is less consistency in the Presidential Addresses to the Federal Assembly. At the regional level, there are more references to economic organizations than security ones, and this is mirrored in the discourses employed as well. The issues that are emphasized in discussions of the world order appear to be very event-driven in these speeches. In some years, such as 2013 and 2015, the world security order predominate in the speeches, in others such as 2012 and 2016, it is the world economic order. There is also some variance in the proportion of text devoted to foreign policy, which most probably reflects the salience of particular international events for the domestic audiences. The Address to the Federal Assembly from 2014 has the largest proportion of text about foreign policy matters, reflecting the importance of events in Ukraine.

Throughout this paper we have noted that economic discourses in Russian foreign policy are important, and should not be overlooked, regardless of whether the professed ambitions are realistic or achievable. The Federal Assembly speeches devote a lot of attention to the prospect of Eurasian economic integration, but once the EAEU is actually launched there is little attention to the economic realities of the project. Instead the attention turns

to talk of Russian economic potential in the Asia-Pacific region, portraying the country as a possible future pole of attraction in the global economy.

The importance of sovereignty, in all its forms, is emphasized in both sets of documents and is particularly pronounced in Putin's annual addresses. In the text itself, it is indicated that not all sovereign states are created equal. Russia has the right to act in a sovereign manner and will not permit outside interference or internal separatist tendencies. Moscow will defend Ukraine's sovereignty in deciding not to sign an Association Agreement with the EU, but it will also support Crimea's sovereign right to separate from a Ukraine that is turning towards the West, even at the expense of territorial integrity of the country. While the West meddles in the sovereign affairs of other countries according to this narrative, the discourses presented argue that Russia protects the sovereignty of other states. Moreover, these documents argue that unlike the West, Russia often has long-standing, primordial ties with countries in which it has intervened, and this has been at the invitation of legitimate rulers.

Nevertheless, the research in this paper reveals that explicit mentions of the concept of the 'Russian world' are almost completely absent from both sets of documents analysed. There is no mention either of any specific neo-imperial idea of Eurasianism. This is not to say that those worldviews do not exist at all amongst Russian political elites, but they are not explicitly used in these official discourses and narratives that are presented to the Russian public or potential audiences in the neighbourhood. Overall our analysis shows that the self-image Russia presented through the discourses in these particular foreign policy documents is of an economically flourishing Russia in a consolidated multipolar world order, a country prepared to work in mutually-beneficial way with other countries, while stressing respect for each other's sovereignty.

The analysis in this paper complements research already carried out as part of the EU-STRAT project on the messages communicated by the EU (Dimitrova *et al* 2016). Building on these foundations, the next stage of research will examine which discourses, narratives and messages projected by both Russia and the EU are actually present in the news media that most citizens consume in Belarus, Ukraine and Moldova. Moreover, we will investigate to what extent there is differentiation across countries, and how the messages communicated by Moscow and Brussels interact in practice in the media and public discourses of the EaP countries.

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8. Appendix A: Database of Foreign Policy Documents

OFFICIAL GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS

Foreign Policy Concepts of the Russian Federation

2008: Russian English
2013: Russian English
2016: Russian English

Military Doctrines of the Russian Federation

2010: Russian English
2014: Russian English

National Security Strategies of the Russian Federation

2009: Russian
2015: Russian

Concept of the Russian Federation's Participation in BRICS

2013: Russian English

Concept of State Policy in the Area of International Development Assistance

2014: Russian English

Information Security Doctrine of the Russian Federation

2016: Russian English

SELECT SPEECHES AND STATEMENTS

Putin's Speech at the Munich Conference on Security Policy

2007: Russian English

Putin's Newspaper Articles during his 2012 Election Campaign

A New Integration Project for Eurasia in *Izvestia*, 3 October 2011 (in Russian)
Russia: The National Question in *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, 23 January 2012 (in Russian)

Presidential Addresses to Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation

2012: Russian English
2013: Russian English
2014: Russian English
2015: Russian English
2016: Russian English

Putin's Meeting with Russian Ambassadors and Permanent Representatives

2012: Russian English

Putin's Speech on the Incorporation of Crimea into the Russian Federation

2014: Russian English

Putin's Speech to the 70th session of the United Nations General Assembly

2015: Russian English

Presidential Meetings with the Valdai International Discussion Club

2012: Russian English
2013: Russian English
2014: Russian English
2015: Russian English
2016: Russian English

9. Appendix B: Complete Results of Coding of the Foreign Policy Concepts

Categories and codes	2008	2013	2016
Sovereignty & power	***5511 (61%)***	***6040 (59%)***	***6774 (67%)***
World Order: general	1419 (26%)	892 (15%)	1289 (19%)
World Order: economic	370 (7%)	513 (9%)	561 (8%)
World Order: security	1543 (28%)	1896 (31%)	2305 (34%)
World Order: international bodies and laws	1062 (19%)	1134 (18%)	997 (15%)
World Order: civilizational multipolarity	170 (3%)	308 (5%)	213 (3%)
Sovereignty	378 (7%)	621 (10%)	761 (11%)
Regional Influence: general	106 (2%)	211 (3%)	95 (1%)
Regional Influence: security	316 (6%)	336 (5%)	362 (5%)
Regional Influence: regional body	147 (3%)	129 (2%)	191 (3%)
Civilization & identity	***838 (10%)***	***1201 (12%)***	***957 (9%)***
Russian/Eurasian Identity	536 (64%)	699 (58%)	658 (69%)
Russia as 'Authentic Europe: traditional values	42 (5%)	0	0
European/Universal Values	260 (31%)	502 (42%)	299 (31%)
Prosperity	***772 (9%)***	***856 (8%)***	***669 (7%)***
Russia's globalization: pole of economic attraction	593 (77%)	607 (71%)	456 (68%)
Eurasian economic integration	179 (23%)	249 (29%)	213 (32%)
Total words in document	**8971**	**10173**	**10157**

10. Appendix C: Complete Results of Coding for Annual Presidential Addresses

Categories and codes	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Sovereignty & power	***994 (9%)***	***1235 (13%)***	***1935 (23%)***	***605 (8%)***	***1051 (11%)***
World Order: general	233 (23%)	40 (3%)	294 (15%)	0	331 (31%)
World Order: economic	236 (24%)	39 (3%)	62 (3%)	109 (18%)	310 (29%)
World Order: security	0	356 (29%)	*169 (9%)*	155 (26%)	105 (10%)
World Order: international bodies and laws	0	225 (18%)	*25 (1%)*	28 (5%)	99 (9%)
World Order: civilizational multipolarity	0	218 (18%)	*8 (0.4%)*	0	*0*
Sovereignty	323 (32%)	221 (18%)	*1050 (54%)*	244 (40%)	*180 (17%)*
Regional Influence: general	0	136 (11%)	*313 (16%)*	0	*26 (2%)*
Regional Influence: security	0	0	*14 (0.7%)*	69 (11%)	*0*
Regional Influence: regional body	202 (20%)	0	*0*	0	*0*
Civilization & identity	***1589 (14%)***	***579 (6%)***	***475 (6%)***	***240 (3%)***	***396 (4%)***
Russian/Eurasian Identity	1525 (96%)	549 (95%)	475 (100%)	240 (100%)	309 (78%)
Russia as 'Authentic Europe: traditional values	0	0	0	0	0
European/Universal Values	64 (4%)	30 (5%)	0	0	87 (22%)
Prosperity	***402 (4%)***	***574 (6%)***	***412 (5%)***	***413 (5%)***	***227 (2%)***
Russia's globalization: pole of economic attraction	269 (67%)	329 (57%)	303 (74%)	387 (94%)	182 (80%)
Eurasian economic integration	133 (33%)	245 (43%)	109 (27%)	26 (6%)	45 (20%)
Total words in document	**11281**	**9755**	**8540**	**7575**	**9209**

The EU and Eastern Partnership Countries
An Inside-Out Analysis and Strategic Assessment

Against the background of the war in Ukraine and the rising tensions with Russia, a reassessment of the European Neighborhood Policy has become both more urgent and more challenging. Adopting an inside-out perspective on the challenges of transformation the Eastern Partnership (EaP) countries and the European Union face, the research project EU-STRAT seeks to understand varieties of social orders in EaP countries and to explain the propensity of domestic actors to engage in change. EU-STRAT also investigates how bilateral, regional and global interdependencies shape domestic actors' preferences and scope of action. Featuring an eleven-partner consortium of academic, policy, and management excellence, EU-STRAT creates new and strengthens existing links within and between the academic and the policy world on matters relating to current and future relations with EaP countries.